

Fostering Matters Ltd

The Coach House, Steadings Business Centre, Maisemore Court, Church Road,
Maisemore, Gloucester GL2 8EY

Monitoring visit

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this independent fostering agency

Fostering Matters is a small, privately owned independent fostering agency. This service provides a range of fostering services, including the placement of sibling groups and parent and child arrangements. There are currently 63 children placed and there are 74 approved foster carers and 44 approved foster carer households.

The manager has been registered since 18 December 2017.

Inspection date: 21 April 2021

Date of previous inspection: 5 March 2018

This monitoring visit

This monitoring visit took place to review two compliance notices. The notices were served following shortfalls identified by the inspector at the assurance visit on 5 March 2021. The concerns were in respect of leadership and management and safeguarding.

The visit was conducted remotely and included telephone discussions with the responsible individual, a member of the senior leadership team and a commissioner for a local authority. In addition, the inspector remotely reviewed records. The registered manager was on annual leave during the visit.

Leaders and managers have completed a root cause analysis that has directly informed an action plan. The plan is comprehensive and detailed, and identifies the cause of the failings. In addition, the leaders and managers commissioned an external agency to scrutinise the report. All commissioning local authorities have had the action plan shared with them.

A review of practice, recording and reporting by leaders and managers has resulted in a more efficient and effective approach to safeguarding. Effective management

oversight was evident across all the records that were scrutinised during the visit.

Leaders and managers have ensured that all children have had their safer care plans reviewed. A new format ensures that they are personalised, and risk is identified and ratified by the local authority social worker. This means that foster carers are provided with the strategies and guidance they need to safely manage risk and keep the children in their care safe.

Supervising social workers are benefiting from a revised approach to supervision. This means that they are given a platform to reflect on their practice and an opportunity to challenge in a safe and constructive way. The inspector found evidence of supervising social workers, leaders and managers demonstrating professional curiosity and reflection.

An improved quality in the professional standards reports completed by supervising social workers means that where necessary, foster carers will be returned to panel without delay. Since the assurance visit on 5 March 2021, supervising social workers have completed professional standards reports in relation to two ongoing safeguarding investigations, both of which are of an impressive quality and are recommending the deregistration of the foster carers.

Leaders and managers have taken positive, dynamic action to address the two compliance notices made following the monitoring visit on 5 March 2021. It is recognised that some actions remain in their infancy and are therefore not yet measurable. However, because of this work, both compliance notices made at the previous monitoring visit are met.

Information about this inspection

The purpose of this visit was to monitor the action taken and the progress made by the independent fostering agency since its last Ofsted inspection.

This inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000.

Independent fostering agency details

Unique reference number: SC061740

Registered provider: Fostering Matters Limited

Registered provider address: Unit 7, Malvern View Business Park, Stella Way, Bishops Cleeve, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire GL52 7DQ

Responsible individual: Michael Castledine

Inspector

Linda Bond, Social Care Inspector

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